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REYNOLDS HISTORICAL
GENEALOGY COLLECTION

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# Following "The Old Mohawk Turnpike."

How sweet is the vale where the Mohawk gently glides.
—BONNY ELOISE.

PRESS OF THE ENTERPRISE AND NEWS
SAINT JOHNSVILLE, NEW YORK
1927

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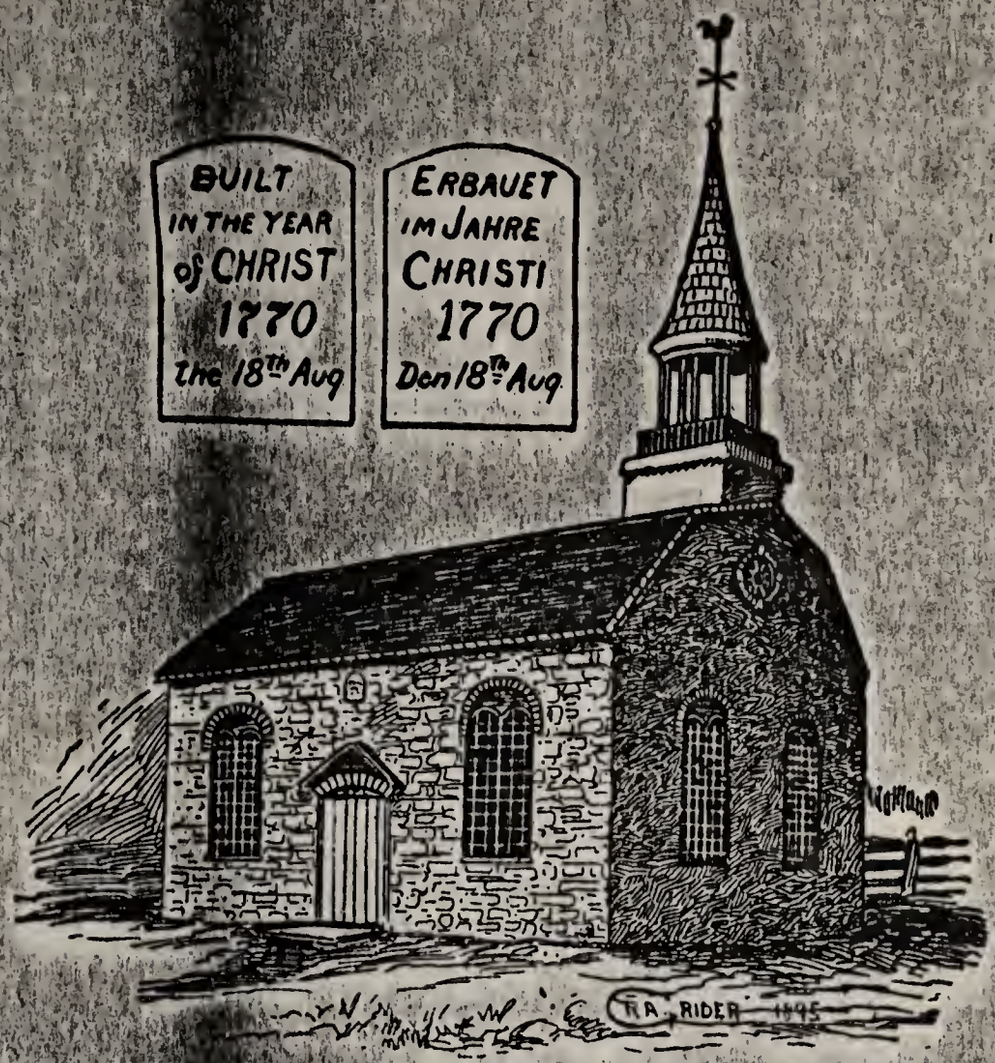
# Following the Old Mohawk Turnpike




# The Old Palatine Church

Together With a Description of the Gen. John Cochran House; Also an Article on the Early Nellis Pioneers by Milo Nellis

PRICE 35 CENTS

PUBLISHED BY THE ENTERPRISE AND NEWS
ST. JOHNSVILLE, N. Y.

Rec'd - July 10 - 1919

# FOREWORD

Last year a movement was started looking to the preservation of the name of the "Old Mohawk Turnpike." Through the efforts of Col. John W. Vrooman of Herkimer and others the historical societies of the Mohawk Valley took proper steps to perpetuate the name. The cooperation of the state was enlisted and it is unlikely that the map makers of the future will ever again tamper with the appellation which belongs to this highway by every historical and traditional right. It has often been said that we of the Mohawk Valley are the last to appreciate the many natural and historic treasures which are so abundant. The valley is rich in natural beauty. It is also clothed with tradition. It has an important place in the history of a nation. The full story can never be told. There is even danger of losing that which has already been told. We read and forget. Passing along the old turnpike we sweep with careless glance some historic old pile of masonry, which if the truth were known, could unfold a story of love, romance, human emotion and kindling life that would cause us pause even in this period of feverish activity, for here was born the spirit of liberty and this very pathway was trodden by the feet of those who carved their way to an empire. To even pass the home of one of Washington's generals who followed from Valley Forge to Yorktown is an honor and to preserve and revive if only for a fleeting period such writings as are available is a pleasant duty. In this little volume the object is to preserve that which has been written and to place it before a new generation. The publisher is indebted to a few friends for their contribution of old newspaper clippings and references, especially to the Misses Kate and Lena Nellis for copies of the Mohawk Valley Register and other papers; to S. L. Frey for a reprint of his former Cochran article; to Rev. J. C. Fassold, Ph. D., present pastor of Trinity and Palatine Church; to Nelson Greene of New York, author and historian; to H. L. Sutherland of St. Johnsville; to Mrs. Margaret Collins of Fonda; to Rev. H. C. Ficken of St. Johnsville; to James Boyd Hunter of New York; to Rev. Charles E. Corwin of New York and to Attorneys G. C. Butler and C. A. Stone of St. Johnsville. Doubtless there are others who have in some measure assisted in the collection of facts here dedicated and to all of these the little volume is inscribed in the hope that it will lead to a higher appreciation of the memory of those who have gone before and who have by their sacrifices made so many beauties of life possible for present and future generations.

THE PUBLISHER.

St. Johnsville, New York, June 20, 1921.

## FOREWORD 1927

Demand for information concerning Palatine Church, ancient edifice, is constantly increasing and additional historic fact is gradually coming to light. In preparing the 1927 edition the publisher has been assisted by Milo Nellis whose untiring interest in early local history coupled with a persistent and zealous research has been of great value in straightening out broken lines. It is through his research in connection with Col. Jacob Klock that establishes the fact that Jacob G. Klock whose name appears on the Oriskany monument was in fact a nephew of Col. Jacob Klock. Steps are now being taken to correct the error and place the name of the old patriot and soldier Col. Jacob where it rightfully belongs as among the foremost heroes of the Revolutionary period.

To Mr. Nellis we are indebted for the brief history of the Nellis Family and also genealogical sketches of the two pioneer families Nellis and Klock. These early pioneer families were so closely allied and played such an important part in the development of this section that no local history is complete without reference to both families.

During the past six months the Mohawk Valley Turnpike which swings gracefully about the base of the old edifice has been rebuilt of solid concrete 27 feet wide and curve about the church is even wider. Engineers at first suggested straightening the curve and leaving the old edifice in an isolated position but tradition and sentiment evidently prevailed and the old church is still occupying its place by the side of the road. In presenting this edition and besides the above mentioned the publisher wishes to add among Mohawk Valley historic collaborators who are doing splendid work for posterity the names of Col. John W. Vrooman of Herkimer, Prof. N. Berton Alter of Nelliston, Harry V. Bush of Canajoharie, Douglas Ayres of Fort Plain and Lt. L. F. Bellinger, U. S. N., stationed at Norfolk, Va.

LOU D. MacWETHY, Publisher.

St. Johnsville, N. Y., August 10, 1927.

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Inv. 5033

# The Old Palatine Church

Comparisons are unnecessary if not odious. All the world is beautiful, from the glittering ice fields surrounding the poles to the palm studded regions of the tropics. It is therefore without drawing comparisons that we invite the traveler to tarry for a moment along the highway that winds in graceful curves along the Mohawk River and follows the famous "Old Mohawk Turnpike."

Landscape without tradition is beauty unadorned. The Mohawk valley is rich in both beauty and tradition. Every nook and corner of the Mohawk Valley is invested with some historic interest carrying the mind back to the days of the flint lock and tomahawk. Here for eight years the torch of liberty was kept burning. Torn asunder by fierce warfare in which the untutored savage was sometimes outdone by his supposedly civilized ally and the still more venomous Tory—the spirit of liberty survived. It was a continuous Valley Forge. Here the first striped flag received its baptism of fire, made from the petticoats of the patriotic wives of Fort Stanwix, and here the last battle of the Revolution was fought near Johnstown, October 25, 1781, six days after the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown.

Traces of these distant days will remain. Here and there along the highway we come across mementos of the Revolution. Not infrequently are found silent burial plots where modest tomb stones cast their shadows across the sleeping place of some Revolutionary hero. Occasional buildings remain, and among these we have chosen for this sketch the old Palatine Church, the oldest church edifice in Montgomery county and which antedates the Revolution by five years.

Standing at an elbow in the road and overlooking the "Old Mohawk Turnpike," located three miles east of St. Johnsville, this rare old structure at once visualizes and typifies the historic past.

Built of selected limestone in 1770 by our early pioneers, it would seem as though they had built into the edifice something of the sturdy character of the men who founded this country.

It is an imposing edifice and the hand of time which has wrought such mighty changes in the valley seems to have passed lightly over the gray stones of Palatine Church. In spite of its antiquity it appears to be as strong and firm as it was in the days of the flint lock and tallow dip.

Concerning Palatine Church, Nelson Greene, the valley historian says:

"The Palatine Evangelical Lutheran Church edifice at Palatine Church, is the oldest church building now standing within the limits of Fulton and Montgomery counties. It was also the first structure in the Palatine or Canajoharie districts to be fittingly built of a permanent material such as the stone of which it is constructed. It was erected in 1770 of stone, by the generous donations of a few individuals.

"Peter Wagner and Andrew Reber contributed 100 pounds each, Jo-

hannes Hess and six Nellises namely William, Jr., Johannes, Henry, Christian and David gave 60 pounds each, while the building of the spire which seems to have been an after consideration, was paid for by the Nellis family exclusively. *

The church remained as originally built for a century when it was remodeled and repaired at a cost of $4,000. In the fall of 1870 on its 100th anniversary, a large celebration and fair were held at which time Governor Seymour delivered an appropriate address. In its early history this society seems never to have had any independent church organization but was supplied by ministers from other churches, principally the Lutheran Church of Stone Arabia."

## HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

An extensive review of the history of the Church was printed in the Fort Plain Register on the occasion of the 100th anniversary and we are indebted to the Misses Kate and Lena Nellis for a copy of that paper which has been preserved. From it we reproduce the following. The article was written by Daniel Spraker, Jr., a gifted scribe of Spraker's Basin who was once clerk of the Board of Supervisors. He has long passed to his reward, but his painstaking efforts towards perpetuating the memory of the old Church are in evidence as one will appreciate by a perusal of the following:

### Palatine Church

The small hamlet by this name, situated about two and one-half miles north of the village of Fort Plain on the east side of the Mohawk River, is the oldest settlement between Utica and Schenectady and for a long time after the Revolutionary War it was the main business place between those two sections. From Jacob P. Fox, of the town of Palatine, now aged 82 years and in the full enjoyment of all his physical and mental faculties, we derive the following information. At the time the old Lutheran Church (now standing) was built in 1770, the land on the north side of the creek, including the Church lot, was owned by Hendrick W. Nellis, who gave the Church a deed of gift of said lot, said deed bearing date January 2, 1769, and which is appended to this article, being copied from the original deed.

We also have the originals of the following papers: The subscription list of donors towards building the Church, the articles of agreemnt between the trustees of the church and the builder, the subscription list to pay the first minister, all of which are also appended, they having been loaned to us by Peter F. Nellis, Esq. of St. Johnsville, who has preserved them among his uncle's papers.

The old Stone Church was thoroughly repaired prior to the year 1870 and its centennial was celebrated August 18th, 1870. The following order of exercises of that celebration is copied from the Mohawk Valley Register of August 26th of that year:

"At 11 o'clock A. M. the exercises commenced in the Church, which of course could hold but a small portion of those in attendance. These exercises consisted: First, of music by the Canajoharie orchestra, led by Harvey Dunckel, Esq. Reading of the Scripture by Rev. F. Felts, of Johnstown. Prayer by Rev. V. F. Bolton, of Schaghticoke. Music, hymn arranged for the occasion.

Address by Rev. Charles A. Smith, D. D., of Philadelphia. Music by orchestra. Benediction by Rev. N. Geortner, of Hamilton College.

After the service in the Church dinner was served in the yard of the so-called Newkirk of C. Y. Edwards place, on the margin of the old Garoga, to such as were lucky enough to gain access to the tables. At two o'clock P. M. Governor Seymour delivered his speech in the same enclosure."

* The maintenance of this portion of the building has been the self appointed duty of the Nellis Family. The last repairs were made in 1920 by the Misses Kate and Lena Nellis of St. Johnsville, N. Y., direct descendants of the original builders.

# Palatine Church as it Appears Today

"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask thy Father, and He will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.—Deut. 32-7.

We extract a few gems from Governor Seymour's address on this occasion: "We can not help thinking of the hardship those old pioneers were necessitated to encounter. The warlike and savage neighbors around them, the scream of the wild hawk and eagle, claiming the lofty pines as their homes. Now you hear the roar of the ponderous trains, bearing the produce of the nation to the metropolis of the country, at the great outlet of the waters of your valley."—"I may safely say no people suffered more; no people did more that shaped the destinies of our great country. Living as they did in the wilds of the Mohawk, in the log huts or houses of the rudest forms, they chose to build a house to the glory of God; and I beseech of you not to look with contempt on that structure one that rivals in form, in material, in beauty and in architecture a great majority of similar structures of today."

We also give a few extracts from the centennial sermon by Rev. Chas. A. Smith, D. D., delivered on this occasion: "The money expended in the erection of the Church was mainly contributed by nine individuals, whose gifts varied from sixty to one hundred pounds. But this was not all they did. The strong handed, able bodied men who favored the enterprise quarried the stone, and hauled it with their own teams, and the women each in turn prepared the meals for the workmen in a rough temporary building erected for the purpose. Thus where the Indian yet roamed, and when events of stirring and fearful moment were soon to transpire, this sacred edifice was planted. And all through the "troublous times" of the Revolution was it preserved, while surrounding fields were laid waste and private dwellings and barns in which had been stored the products of the harvest, were burned to the ground. And it still stands improved and beautified. I am glad to say—a memorial of the zeal and self denying liberality of the few honored men and women who consecrated their time and means to the work."—"One hundred years ago Indian tribes roamed over these fields and along these water courses. Where the city of Buffalo now stands was an undrained marsh. Fulton, who applied steam to navigation, was only five years old, the far west was an unexplored territory, occupied by the wigwam and the bison, the wealth of California lay undisturbed and unimagined—events had not yet matured into that crisis which made room for the burning eloquence of Chatham and the heroic deeds and enlightened statesmanship of Washington. The canal, the railroad, the telegraph were things undreamed of. Postroads were unknown."

Hendrick W. Nellis' son Henry, and his son Robert went to Canada and joined the British army at the commencement of hostilities, consequently the Hendrick W. Nellis farm was confiscated by the Government. After the Revolutionary War this farm was purchased of the Government by Charles Fox, uncle to the father of our informant, Jacob P. Fox. The farm subsequently came into the possession of his son, General Peter C Fox, who was in the war of 1812. General Fox kept a hotel, stage house and subsequently a store at Palatine Church, and was the leading business man in this section in those days. He also was elected to the Legislature on two different occasions. At this date Palatine Church was the main business center between Utica and Schenectady, having two stores, grist, saw and fulling mills, and was the headquarters for "General Training" and county political gatherings each year, and the only Masonic Lodge between Utica and Schenectady was located here. Subsequently Christopher Fox, brother of Gen. Fox, purchased this farm, which afterwards came into the possession of Archibald Fox and is now owned by James Spraker of Palatine Bridge.

The farm on the south side of the Garoga Creek, called the "Newkirk farm," was first settled by William Fox, the great grandfather of our informant, and afterwards came into the possession of his son Philip, who had a grist mill burned during the Revolution, which stood just below the present dam and east of the present mill. The mill now standing was erected by Philip Fox who ran the grist mill and kept hotel during the Revolution on the south side of the creek near the present site of the

old Fox dwelling. From Philip Fox the farm was sold to Peter Schuyler, and by Schuyler to Col. Charles Newkirk, who continued the farming and mill business. The farm then passed to his nephew, Charles Newkirk and then to Archibald Fox, and from Archibald Fox to James Spraker, who is now the owner.

Since these lands came into the possession of Mr. Spraker he has thoroughly repaired the buildings and built new ones where necessary and otherwise improved the farm. At the periods whose histories we have written more business was transacted at Palatine Church than at any other village in the county, the now flourishing villages of Amsterdam, Fonda, Fultonville, Canajoharie, Fort Plain and St. Johnsville being but small hamlets. Garoga Creek, an unfailing stream, runs through the village and empties in the Mohawk River near by. * The lands on each side of the creek are owned by James Spraker, Esq., and Peter F. Nellis, and offers most excellent water privileges for manufacturing purposes.

D. S., JR.

Spraker's Basin, October, 1879.

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### THE NELLIS COAT OF ARMS


Regarding the Coat of Arms From Reitstap (Authority on Heraldry.

Arms of Nelis—Nellis.

Nelis of Malines Belgium (Chevaliers. 27 Aug., 1786.) Recognition of said title 7 Sep. 1822 or two cocks back to back gules, one foot uplifted, heads affronted. Helmet crouned crest, a cock foot uplifted gules, head contourne, turned to sinister. Motto Ne-lis (no strife )

Note—Gules means red.

## The Deed of Gift

The original deed of gift is still preserved and is at the time of this writing, 1921, in the possession of the Nellis Sisters, (Katherine and Lena) direct descendants, who reside at St. Johnsville, N. Y. The deed itself is a splendid specimen of penmanship and is herewith reproduced for the purpose of preserving the quaint old phraseology and to show how dependent we are on the old English courts for our legal phrases.

Following is the deed of gift of the Church premises by Hendrick W. Nellis, as referred to above:

THIS INDENTURE, Made the Second Day of January in the Ninth Year of His Majesty's Reign, King George the third, &c., Anno Domini one thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty Nine Hendrick W. Nellis, of Canajoharie in the County of Albany, &c., province of New York, Yeoman, one part and the church wardens hath given, granted, aliened, Infeoffed and Confirmed and by these presents Doth give, grant, alien, infeoff and Confirm, unto the said Church wardens, and their respective successors, a certain Tract or parcel of Land situate and lying in the Tenure and Occupation of the said Hendrick W. Nellis, which being a Lott of Land on the North side of the Mohawk River at Canajoharie aforesaid in a Patent granted formerly unto Francis Harrison Spradt and others, and is distinguished and known by the name of Lott N. Eight, and the aforesaid Tract or Parcel of Land shall be a Parallelogram of Eighty Feet long and Sixty four feet broad upon the said Lott N. Eight on the South side of the High Road, and the aforementioned Length of Eighty Feet shall front the High road aforesaid; Together with all the Woods, Underwoods, Trees, Timbers, feedings, ways, paths, passages, Waters, Watercourses, Eastments, profits, Commodities, advantages, Hereditaments and appurtenances whatsoever to the said Messuage Lands and premises abovement'w, or any part thereof, belonging or in any wise appertaining: And the Reversion and Reversions, Remainder a nd Remainders, Rent and Services of all and singular the said premises; And all the Estate, Right, Title, Interest, Claim and Demand whatsoever, of him the said Hendrick W. Nellis, of, in and to the said Messuage, Lands and Premises and of, in and to every part and parcel thereof, with their and every of their appurtenances, and all Deeds, Evidences and Writings concerning the said premises only, or any part thereof, now in the hands and custody of the said Hendrick W. Nellis. TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said Mes-

* Extensive shipping was done from the landing at the mouth of the creek where another settlement known as Cranes Landing flourished during this period.

suage, Lands, Hereditaments, and all and singular the premises hereby granted and conveyed, or mentioned or intended to be granted and Conveyed, with their appurtenances, unto the said Churchwardens of the said Lutheran Congregation and their successors, to the only proper use and behoof of the said Lutheran Congregation forever. And the said Hendrick W. Nellis, for himself, his heirs, Ex's and ad'mrs, doth covenant, promise and grant to and with the said Churchwardens, by these presents, that the said Lutheran Congregation shall and Lawfully may, from henceforth forever hereafter, peacefully and quietly, Have, hold, use, occupy, possess and enjoy the said Messuage, Lands and premises abovement'd, to be hereby granted, with their and every of their appurtenances, free, clear and discharged, or well and sufficiently saved and kept harmless of and from all former and other Grants, Bargains, Sales, Gifts, Jointures, Feoffments, Leases, Dowers, Estates, Encoffs, Rent Charges, Arrearages of Rents, Statutes, Judgments, Recognizances, Executions and of and from all other Titles, Troubles, Charges and Incumbrances whatsoever, had made, committed, done or suffered, or to be had made, committed, done or suffered by him the said Hendrick W. Nellis his heirs, ex'rs or adm's or any other person or persons Lawfully claiming, or to claim, by from or under him, or any or either or them. In witness whereof the said Hendrick W. Nellis hath hereunto set his hand and seal the Day nd Year first above written.

HENRICH WM. NELLES.

Sealed and Delivered in the presence of

Memorandum: It is covenanted and agreed by the said Hendrick W. Nellis, before the Sealing and Delivery of these presents; this Tract of Land hereby granted shall be butted and bounded to a certain Mark Stone, marked with the * letters PW., AR., CN. along the fence on the high road southw'd where the Length of this granted Parallelogram shall begin.

ANDREAS REBER,
JOHN EISENLORD,
ETER WAGNER.

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The original subscription list for the erection of the church follows:

MONEY PROMISED AS AFORESAID

| | |
|---|---|
| Peter Waggoner | 150 |
| Andrew Reber | 25 |
| Christian Nellis, Jr. | 25 |
| Andreas Nellis | 20 |
| William W. Nellis | 20 |
| Debold Nellis | 10 |
| William Straub | 5 |
| Frederick Gehler | 2 |
| Ernest Gear | 2 |
| Adam Thumb | 2 |
| Nicholas Thumb | 2 |
| James Barbaset | 2 |
| Francis Renand | 2 |
| Hendrick W. Nellis | 25 |
| William Hess | 12 |
| Peter Sits | 2 |
| Johannes Hess | — |
| Johannes Nellis | 15 |
| John Eisenlord | 4 |
| Adam Nellis | — |
| Peter Balsly | — |
| Jacob Durand | — |
| Jacob Fiander | — |
| George Gintner | — |
| Andreas Fort | — |
| George Kling | — |
| Peter Lampman | — |
| Jacob More | — |
| Christian Nellis | — |

The following subscription for the compensation of the minister is evidently from the date, not the first that was raised. It is probably the oldest now in existence and is sufficiently unique to be of interest. It is given verbatim et literatum:

Know all men by these presents that we, the subscribers, am held and firmly bound to the said Drusteis of the Lutheran Church of Patetine for every third Sontey to pay him twenty-five pounds currency yearly from the First of Saptember in the year of Our lort 1797, and to Find him the third of the Fire wood and likewice the Fansing and twenty sqipele of Whead yearly.

| | L | S |
|---|---|---|
| Phiilp Gales | | 06 |
| George Wagoner | 1 | 12 |
| Peter Landman | 1 | 12 |
| Joseph Waggoner | 1 | 12 |
| Jno. I. Nellis | | 08 |
| Johannis Nellis | 1 | 04 |
| John Waggoner | 1 | 01 |
| Libs Nelles | | 12 |
| William Nelles | | 12 |
| John Fichel | 1 | 01 |
| Peter WaggonerW. Jun. | 1 | 01 |
| Peter Waggoner | 1 | 01 |
| Peter Schram | | 08 |
| John Hess | 1 | 01 |
| William F. Nellis | | 16 |
| Dabold Tum | | 06 |
| Conrath Thum | | 08 |
| John Frickey | | 06 |
| Nicolas Thum | | 02 |
| Josaph Nellis | | 12 |
| Hanry Belnger | | 01 |
| John Lehmann | | 01 |
| Peter W. Nelles | | 10 |
| Henry W. Nelles | | 10 |
| Marcus Dusler | | 08 |
| John Jacob Dayter | | 08 |
| Jacob Dusler, Jun. | | 0. |
| Jacob Dusler | | 02 |
| Nicolas Smid | | 06 |
| Jeremiah Smid | | 02 |
| Peter Smid | | 01 |
| Willem Dusler | | 03 |
| Peter Hofman | | 01 |
| Jacob Harddon | | 002 |
| Henrich Borgeorf | | 03 |
| Dines Hellenboft | | 01 |
| Jacob Yoran | | 08 |
| Jacob Yoran, Jun. | | 02 |
| John W. Nelles | | 05 |
| Michael V. Pauder | | 10 |
| Christian Groose | | 008 |
| Gideon Bies | | 08 |
| Adam A. Thum | | 08 |
| David Nellis W. | | |
| Nicholas Dass | 1 | 01 |
| Peter H. Nellis | | 01 |

George Waggoner, 1 1-2 skipels wead, 2 loads wood; Peter Landman, 1 1-2 skipels wead, 1 load wood; Joseph Waggoner, 1 1-2 skipels wead, 2 loads wood; Johannis Nellis, 1 1-2 skipels wead, 1 load wood; John Waggoner, 1 skepil wead, 2 loads wood; William Nelles, 1

* Initials of Peter Wagner, Andres Reber, Christian Nellis.

THE OLD PALATINE CHURCH IN 1860

From a wood cut appearing in the Lutheran Home Journal. At this period the Church contained the ancient balcony, the spiral pulpit and sounding board

## INDIAN MARRIAGE 1772

The following extracts from the church register are not uninteresting inasmuch as they show that Indians were sometimes married and their children baptized by Christian ministers. They are translated from the German:

### MARRIED

| | |
|---|---|
| Anno 1772 Ap. 10. | Two Indians wild people Jacob with Maria Aroskeusch. |
| Anno 1770 Nov. 26 | Adam's daughter from Ochquagna with Asa Adriscka (wild persons) |

### BAPTISED

| | |
|---|---|
| Anno 1780 Feb. 19 | An Indian—Juhana—Born 6 Feb. |

Wittnesses: Gotlieb Nistle, Maria Dettin.

1-2 skipels wead, 2 loads wood; Peter Waggoner, Jun., 1 1- skipels wear, 2 loads wood; John Hess, 1 1-2 skipels wead; William I. Nellis, 1 skipel wead, 1 load wood; Debold Tum, 1 load wood; Joseph Nellis, 1 skipel wead, 1 load wood; Peter Nellis, 1 skipel wead, 1 load wood; Henry Nellis, 1 skipel wead; Michael Pauter, 1 skipel wead; Christian Groofe, 1 skipel wead.

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## THE 150th ANNIVERSARY

On August 18, 1920 the 150th anniversary of Palatine Church was celebrated. The old Church was thrown open to the members and visitors and among the many who attended not a few were direct descendants of the original builders. At 12:00 noon the old bell pealed forth its welcoming sound, one tap for each year of its age. This loving task fell to the Misses Lena and Kate Nellis and Mrs. Melvin Shults each of whom tugged at the rope 50 times. The mellow tones brought reminiscences of the changes time has wrought since the first day the church was opened. On that occasion the call was sounded from a triangle which remained for many years and was dropped either by accident or design and the new bell thus procured.

The day was perfect and the program was carried out in every detail exactly as planned. The 150th celebration began at noon as above mentioned and at 2:00 the Rev. J. C. Fassold, Phd., of Stone Arabia, local pastor, acted as chairman and introduced Mr. Allen E. Johnson of Schenectady, of the Schenectady Savings Bank. Mr. Johnson gave an interesting talk and recalled a former celebration in which he had taken part. He was followed by Dr. B. E. Fake, of Fort Plain and Miss Adelaide Franklin, regent of the St. Johnsville Chapter, D. A. R. who recalled the fact that the D. A. R. had placed a marker on the church on a former occasion, and gave a talk on the history of the Palatines. Judge J. L. Moore of Fort Plain was the next speaker; followed by Mrs. C. P. Lampman. The chairman also called on Col. J. Vrooman of Herkimer, Mrs. F. Callan, regent of the Herkimer Chapter and Mrs. Spraker of Canajoharie.

The evening program was also in the hands of Rev. J. C. Fassold and short talks were made by L. D. MacWethy, Rev. L. A. Wagschal and Rev. Elmer J. Flanders. Ice cream and cake were served by the ladies of the congregation. During the afternoon exercises one of the speakers asked how many were present who had attended the century celebration fifty years ago. About fifteen held up their hands.

Of the past celebrations the most elaborate one was the 100th anniversary at which time an elaborate program was prepared and the main feature was a speech by the Hon. Horatio Seymour then governor of the state. Following this came the 125th celebration at which time the Rev. A. T. Worden of Ames delivered an address in the afternoon and Alfred Dolge of Dolgeville delivered a very patriotic and inspiring address in the evening. There was also a morning sermon by the Rev. Meet of Johnstown.

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## OTHER CELEBRATIONS

The 140th anniversary was held in 1910 at which time the D. A. R. unveiled a bronze tablet. Mrs. Leah A. Devendorf then regent gave a talk on the history of the D. A. R. and the part the women of the Palatine Church played in the Revolution. Attorney Joseph Nellis of Watertown, himself a descendant of the Palatines was the speaker of the day. Rev. J. Haher of Hartwick Seminary also delivered an address at this time.

### VARIOUS CHANGES

Of the various changes in the church the most drastic was the removal of the interior arrangements taking away the high pulpit with its sounding board, the balcony and the old fashioned pews. This was opposed at the time by the late Peter F. Nellis who with prophetic vision foresaw the time when these things would come to have an increased value in the eyes of succeeding generations. The various changes have come about gradually and under the need of the times until the present day. That the sacredness of the edifice has come to have a greater hold on each generation is apparent and it is undoubtedly true that in the future there will be a tendency to preserve the edifice in its ancient form rather than to strive for modern effect. The building is in a good state of preservation as it stands today and to all intents and purposes is as good as when built.

## Pastors of Palatine Church

The history of Palatine Church is closely associated with that of Trinity Church of Stone Arabia inasmuch as both are of the Lutheran denomination and were served by the same pastor. Stone Arabia was settled by Dutch Reformed and German Lutheran settlers in 1720-3 Inasmuch as both charges were served by the same pastor we append a list of pastors which is kindly prepared for this booklet from the church records of Trinity Church at Stone Arabia. The list antedates Palatine but its historic interest is obvious and the entire list is printed. Palatine church being built in 1770 would begin with the pastorate of the sixth Stone Arabia pastor, Theophilus England, 1766 1773. From 1773 to December, 1777, both churches were unsupplied but a glance at contemporary history and the ravages incident to the Revolutionary war will account for that. Then came Carl Frederich Friderici, 1777-1780. The same year Philip Jacob Grotz assumed charge and remained until the close of the century. These three men labored during the Revolutionary period and it is a matter of regret that their lives and works are not recorded more fully. On August 19, 1780 Stone Arabia was destroyed and the fate of Palatine Church hung on a bow string. The restraining hand of a British soldier stayed the flaming arrow affixed to the long bow of an Indian savage. This incident saved to us the splendid relic which 150 years after is the pride of the entire countryside.

### GOV. SEYMOUR AT 100th ANNIVERSARY

At the Centennial Anniversary, August 18, 1870 Horatio Seymour, then governor of the State of New York closed his speech at Palatine Church with these words, as pertinent today as on the day they were delivered: "If the religious requirements of this community should ever demand a larger place of worship build anew, and on some other spot. For the sake of your forefathers whose memories and deeds we cherish, for the sake of yourselves and your posterity, I beg of you not to tear down that old landmark. Let it stand for a monument to the life of God and the religious liberty of its builders. When God in his own time sees fit to put it back to the dust from whence it sprang, He will do so. But don't, let me beseech of you, tear it down."

## THE PASTORS OF TRINITY PALATINE CHURCHES
1729-1921

These German Lutherans settled here by settlement in 1710 Ind. Pat.

1. Rev. John Jacob Ehle, pastor built Log Church, present sight Trinity in 1729.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | William Christopher Berkenmeyer | | 1733 | | 1734 |
| 3 | Peter Nicholas Sommer | July 17 | 1734 | | 1751 |
| 4 | Johann Friederich Ries | December 1 | 1751 | | 1760 |
| 5 | Frederick Shultz | | 1762 | | 1764 |
| 6 | Theophilus England | | 1766 | | 1773 |
| 7 | Carl Frederick Friderici | December | 1777 | May 4 | 1780 |
| 8 | Philip Jacob Grotz | | 1780 | December 1 | 1809 |
| 9 | Peter William Domeier | October 21 | 1810 | | 1826 |
| 10 | John D. Lawyer | March 1 | 1827 | April 18 | 1830 |
| 11 | Charles A. Schmidt | July 4 | 1830 | October 4 | 1839 |
| 12 | Martin J. Stover | November 3 | 1839 | January 7 | 1844 |
| 13 | Henry Immanuel Smith | February 13 | 1844 | December 1 | 1844 |
| 14 | Anton Adolphus Rumpff | March 1 | 1845 | June 8 | 1854 |
| 15 | Sylvander Curtis | March 9 | 1855 | July 12 | 1857 |
| 16 | Nicholas Wirt | November 1 | 1865 | September | 1877 |
| 17 | W. W. Gulick | November 14 | 1877 | | |
| 18 | B. E. Fake, D. D. | May 20 | 1888 | June 12 | 1892 |
| 19 | F. W. Moot | July 1 | 1892 | | |
| 20 | W. F. Whitteker | September 1 | 1895 | | |
| 21 | L. B. Dutcher | March 26 | 1899 | July 1 | 1911 |
| 22 | D. A. Wright | July 9 | 1911 | March 31 | 1915 |
| 23 | L. F. Wagschal | July 1 | 1915 | November 16 | 1919 |
| 24 | J. Calvin Fassold, Ph. D. | January 1 | 1920 | | |

## WHY THE CHURCH WAS NOT DESTROYED

Rufus A. Gridner, writing for the Utica Saturday Globe in August, 1895 on the occasion of the 125th anniversary tells why the old church was not destroyed during the Revolution. The incident was obtained by the above writer in an interview with the late Peter F. Nellis in 1886. Says the writer, "The old church in Palatine was not destroyed by John Johnson's army during the raid October 19th, 1780, when few buildings escaped burning. It stands on the border of the road over which the invading army moved. For generations it had been an unsolved question why it escaped burning when everything else that could be destroyed met that fate. About ten years ago visitors from Canada named Nellis came to visit relatives of that name living near St. Johnsville. From them it was learned that when the raiders reached this church, a party of Indians stopped. One of them fastened a fagot to an arrow and was about lighting it to fire upon the shingled roof of the church when a British officer interferred saying, "Before we left Canada, I promised my friend Nellis that this church should not be burnt. He was one of the chief contributors towards building it, and hopes to return to his farm again when the war is over." The Indians passed on and the church was saved.

# The Nellis Family in Colonial Days

## WERE EARLIEST SETTLERS IN THIS PORTION OF VALLEY

**Located on Land Near Palatine Church from Which Church Property was Donated. Grave of Christian Nellis First Settler Marked. Sleeps Near Fort Klock in Old Cemetery Overlooking Mohawk Valley Turnpike Just East of St. Johnsville.**

The history of the Old Palatine Church is so closely entwined with the Nellis family that a brief sketch of that family is attached. This was prepared by Milo Nellis who has given a great deal of time to a perusal of the family history. The appended sketch is very brief owing to lack of space. Mr. Nellis has in preparation a more comprehensive study of the subject which when produced will be as complete and accurate as modern research can provide. The publisher of this work wishes to acknowlegde the contribution above which adds several previously unwritten facts which are of great value.

The best information obtainable indicates that the name Ne-lls (Nellis) is of French origin; the family is therefore believed to have been of those Huguenots driven from France when Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Many of the refugees fled to the Palatines of Germany on the banks of the Rhine but were again driven from there by the murdering armies of the same monarch in 1710. In the spring of that year 13,000 fleeing Palatines arrived in London in three months. Queen Anne sent 3,000 to America among whom were three Nellis brothers, William, Christian and Johannes. They were born in Heidelberg, Germany. Apparently their parents perished on that terrible voyage to America as no record of their arrival appears. William, the oldest son was but 16 years of age. They were quartered for months on what is now Governor's Island and later were transferred to Governor Hunter's "tar camps" on the upper Hudson River near Germantown and West Camp of the present day. In the winter of 1710 William Nellis' name appears among those in the camp called "Queensburg" on the east bank of the Hudson. In 1711 he joined Governor Nicholson's expedition against the French and Indians. In the fall of 1713 Governor Hunter abandoned his tar camps and left the Palatines destitute, half naked, homeless and starving to face the winter. They applied to and were received by the Indians at Scho-

### BURIAL PLACE OF OUR FIRST SETTLERS

The known burial place of at least two of our earliest settlers is at the old burying ground of "Klock's Church," just east of St. Johnsville, from whence in 1804 the society moved to St. Johnsville and erected the first Reformed Church on land sold by Jacob Zimmerman, a descendant of the first white settler in St. Johnsville. These graves are marked by crude limestone slabs and cover the remains of Christian Nellis, and Hendrick Klock, two of the first white settlers in this section. From all accounts Hendrick Klock was a ** trader and knew this country and the Indians before the land was opened for settlement. The inscriptions on the markers of these two original white settlers should be preserved from further erosion by the elements or marked in some way so that the identity of the founders of the Mohawk Valley settlement may be preserved to posterity.

** Described as a yeoman from Schoharie in his contract deed for lot No. 13 of the Harrison Patent, August 26, 1725.

harie after a harrowing journey through the wilderness across the mountains, to which they gave the name Heidelberg and which has been transformed to Helderberg in handing down. There they remained nearly ten years when land title troubles instigated by Governor Hunter made them abandon the land they had improved and flee still deeper into the wilderness. Johannes joined a group that floated down the Susquehanna to William Penn's settlements located near Gettysburg, Penn. William and Christian came to the Mohawk Valley by the way of Schoharie Creek. Governor Burnet who succeeded Governor Hunter and had been advised by the latter took title to the land of the Harrison Patent instead of giving title to the settlers as had been promised, and further trouble ensued. As a result Wiliam Nellis and 26 others as a reward for their military service of 1711 and "their loyalty to government" finally secured title on October 19, 1723 to the Stone Arabia Patent. William secured lots Nos. 32 and 42 of this patent. About the same time Hendrick Klock a Dutch Indian trader who evidently knew something of the country embraced the opportunity afforded by the Harrison Patent trouble and secured lot No. 13 of that patent. The two patents adjoined. William Nellis married Margretha a daughter of Hendrick Klock and on December 21, 1754 his son William secured with his uncle George Klock, the Klock and Nellis Patent. William Nellis, Senior had five sons William who married Marit Dorothea Saltsman who had a son Henry, born October fourteenth, 1756 and a daughter Margaretha born February 21, 1753; Henry W., Johannes, Ludwig and Andrew. His son William also had a son William who was the father of Mrs. Melvin Shults of the present generation. His son Henry W. secured half of lot No. 8 of the Harrison Patent and gave therefrom the site for the Palatine Stone Church built in 1770. When the Revolutionary war broke Henry W. son who held office under Sir William Johnson, with his son Robert went to Canada with Sir John Johnson, joined the British Army and forfieted their land which subsequently came into the hands of the Cochran family. Henry W. saved the old church from destruction when Sir John ravished this section but he never returned to the valley to live and his descendants form a large family still living in Canada. William Sr. died and was buried at Stone Arabia January 17, 1778, aged 84 year, 10 days. On February 29, 1718 Christian Nellis also married a daughter of Hendrick Klock named Marvalis. In 1725 he secured lot No. 12 of the Harrison Patent adjoining the land of his father in law. This land remained in possession of his direct descendants until about 1887 when it was sold and purchased by Alpha Nellis of Ephratah. Christian had six sons, Christian, Henry, Robert, Adam, George and Theobold. He died in 1771 aged 74 years and was buried in the old "Klock Church" yard close to where the first church stood. His grave marked with a rude limestone slab, lettered in crude German with a cold chisel can still be deciphered. A few paces distant is found his father-in-law's slab marked "Here Ley H. K. 1769—92 Jahr."

Christian, Jr. became active on the Tryon County Vigilance Committee of the Revolutionary War. His house and grist mill on the flats between the present railroad and the river was Fort Nellis. He fought at Oriskany, served as a judge of Tryon County, attended at least one meeting of the state legislature at Poughkeepsie and was killed by his runaway team at Timmerman's Mill—now St. Johnsville on August 18, 1808. He and his sister, widow of Col. Jacob Klock are buried on the private burial plot of Lot. No. 12 of the Harrison Patent. Their markers though weathrer beaten can still be deciphered.

Christian, Jr. had three sons Christian, Jacob C. and John C. This Jacob C. is the grandfather of the present day Jacob C. Nellis * still living in Fort Plain in his 95th year.

MILO NELLIS.
St. Johnsville, N. Y.

July 4, 1926.

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Estates confiscated—Henry Nellis.

Estates Forfeited—Henry W. Nellis, Robert Nellis, Robert W. Nellis.

* This Jacob C. Nellis died January, 1927 at Fort Plain.

# The Venerable Weather Vane

## AN AGED FOWL

**Weather Rooster on Palatine Church Spire Receives New Dress of Gold Leaf on His 150th Birthday.**

St. Johnsville Enterprise, September 1, 1920

Surmounting the weather vane, on the spire of Palatine Church, is a

bronze rooster, who is to have a new coat of gold leaf. When the rooster receives his new gilding and again takes his place higher up where he can overlook the famous "Mohawk Turnpike" he will look as good as new in spite of his advanced years. This rooster is 150 years old. When he first attained his perch this country was paying allegiance and involuntary taxes to his more or less gracious majesty, King George the Third. Geographically he was located in the county of Albany which two years later under the political administration of Sir William Johnson became Tyron county. From his elevated perch he looked down on a strangely mixed race of beings. Red men, (wild men) as the Dutch called them, members of the famous Six Nations, Dutch traders, French priests, Dutch Reformed Church dominies and the skin clad hunters and trappers of the time. Under his observation passed a strange and picturesque procession. Following close on his ascension came the Revolutionary war. The Red Coated British soldiers and the hardy Indian Allies against the Continental army. An engagement at Klock's Field took place under his very eye, 2½ miles away. Across the meadows the Mohawk teemed with barges and freight laden packets which continued until the building of the canal. The turnpike which runs about the base of the church which was at first a toll road became peopled with vehicles carrying a venturesome people to the frontiers of Western New York and Ohio. Following in swift succession came the canal, the railroad and the macadam Ever westward wended the stream of humanity. As an empire grew into magnificence this old rooster remained firm on his perch where he was originally placed by the members of the Nellis family who selected him from the Nellis coat of arms which came down to them from their old French Huguenot ancestry in France. Nothing surprised this old bird and ever he faced the wind squarely. Could he have been capable of observation he must have noticed that always this procession wended westward. The barges on the river, the wagons and vehicles ever pressed westward. Later the same route of travel was noticed on the canal and

the railroad. Only once was there danger of an eastward invasion and thanks of Gen. Herkimer and the sturdy pioneers of the Mohawk Valley St. Leger was turned back at Oriskany. Of all the vehicles blazing the way to the new empire none of them came east until 1910 when Atwood, the pioneer aviator whizzed overhead on his way from St. Louis to the coast. * His bronze and senseless ears, could they have heard, would have been familiar to the war whoop of the painted savage, the gutteral shouts of the Dutch teamsters, the songs of the slaves who were given a corner in the church below for divine worship. He could have heard the songs of the whip-poor-wills, the whistle of the Bob White and many song birds long since extinct in this region. The wild deer and black bear have roamed within his ken and the red fox sported unscared by man. From the war whoop to the gentle purr of the modern motor is a far off cry and yet this venerable old bird has heard them all, seen them all and the end is not yet. When he regains his perch resplendent in his new coat of gold leaf and sets again into the wind for another long vigil what sights may come. He cannot talk, but his very presence is an epic. He has presided over the birth of an empire, and he deservs the tribute of every passer by, for he symbolizes the greatest period of advancement in the history of the whole world and he starts again on another epoch, the outcome of which no man can tell, but of which judging by the past, is pregnant with possibilities and advancement beyond the dreams of the present. And so when again this venerable bird mounts his perch, salute him reverently. He points to the past and the future and he is a wise old bird in his day which is at once the past, the present and future.

NOTE. The rooster weather vane is found on many early churches and seems to have possessed a quality aside from its service as a weather vane. It was evidently a symbol, the exact meaning of which is now obscure. A partial explanation is afforded by by Rev. Charles E. Corwin of New York, an authority on Dutch Reformed Church History. He says: "The weather cock was used on Church spires to tell the direction of the wind for two reasons. First because the tail made a broad surface well adapted to its purpose, and second, because the cock was the bird that called Peter to repentance. It therefore became about the ninth century a symbol of clerical vigilance. It became very common on Dutch churches. A weathercock of beaten brass stood on the spire of the church in Albany from 1657 to 1808. It is now in possession of the Madison Avenue Church. The Palatine weathercock was contributed by the Nellis Brothers and as the rooster was at that time considered proper form as a church symbol it may have been adopted for no other reason. The Nellis family coat of arms, however, bears the cock in the center field and it is possible that the cock as a church symbol and also as a family symbol appealed strongly to the brothers and was therefore adopted both as a family and church symbol.

* Two dirigibles have now passed over his head, the ill fated Shenandoah and the S R I, July 30, 1927. Also Col. Charles A. Lindberg in the "Spirit of St. Louis", trans-Atlantic pioneer, July 28, 1927.

# Was Friend of George Washington

## Dr. John Cochran, Surgeon General in Washington's Army, Once Resided Near Palatine Church, House Still Standing.

### THE COCHRAN HOUSE

By S. L. Frey

Near the western boundary of the Town of Palatine, within sight of the old church, and looking across the broad flat lands skirting the Mohawk river stands an old fashioned square house, surrounded by locust trees.

That it has stood there for a long time is evident, but that it was the home of the Surgeon General of the Revolutionary army is probably known to but few.

Those who see it from the car window or who pass it on the highway may give it a transient thought, and wonder who built it, but so few facts are known and so few traditions survive that it is vain to inquire concerning it.

At the beginning of this century, when it became necessary for purposes of trade and intercourse with the interior, various roads were laid out stretching from Albany, westward toward the great wilderness, the Genesee and Ohio country.

Along these roads when they were opened, numerous villages suddenly sprang into activity and prominence, full of bustle and the promise of great things. Such was Cherry Valley on the western turnpike and Palatine Bridge on the Mohawk.

Here at the mouth of the Garoga Creek, "Fox's Mills" had ground the grain for a wide region, for many years; here stood the oldest stone church of the district of Palatine, with a huge iron triangle for a bell, and this inscription deeply carved in a stone above the door, "Erbauet im Yahr Christi 1770 Den 18 ten Aug."

The charred ruins of farm houses and barns could be seen on all the hills and along the streams, for the country had been again and again raided by the hordes of Johnson and Brant.

But although entirely laid waste, at the return of peace it began to recover from the effects of fire and tomahawk. So that when the Cochran family came here some years previous to 1800, the section seemed to be again prosperous and happy.

Dr. John Cochran was born in Pennsylvania in 1730 and was engaged as a surgeon in the French army. His wife was Gertrude, the only sister of Major Gen. Philip Schuyler.

At the opening of the Revolution, Dr. Cochran was living in Albany and he was recommended by Washington and appointed by Congress, Surgeon General in the Middle Department. This position he filled with honor till 1781 when he was promoted to be Director General of the Hospitals of the United States.

Thatcher in his Military Journal, April 30th, 1781, says, "I accompanied Dr. John Hart to pay his recpects to Dr. John Cochran, who is lately promoted to the office of the Director General of the Hospitals of the United States, * * * he has the reputation of being an able and experienced practitioner."

At the close of the war Washington appointed him commissioner of loans for the State of New York, and he again resided at Albany, held the office until disabled by a paralytic stroke. He then resigned and moved with his family to Palatine, where according to one account he died Ap-

ril 6th, 1807, aged 77 years. Pomeroy Jones however, in his history of Oneida County has the following clipping from some old newspaper, "Died in this village (Utica) in April, 1803, Dr. John Cochran, Director General of the Military Hospitals of the United States in the war of the Revolution, aged 79 years."

It appears from the wording of this that it was written some time after the event and therefore that the writer had fallen into an error in some way, and Dr. Cochran died not in Utica but at his home in Palatine.

Dr. Cochran left two sons James and Walter Livingston. They were both graduates from Columbia College, and were both admitted to the bar.

James the elder, attained considerable prominence in his profession, and he was a member of Congress in the year 1797 and 1799. His competitor for the place was Judge Cooper, father of the novelist.

Both James and Walter had commissions in John Adams' standing army. The first was a major and the latter a captain, but when Jefferson came into power in 1800, all Adams' work was overturned, and the Cochrans retired to private life, and came permanently to reside with their father at Palatine Church.

James and a number of young men of the prominent families of the valley had been admitted to practice law at about the same time, but they, being the sons of wealthy men, disliked the drudgery of trying cases in court, and so were in the habit of employing a young fellow graduate of theirs whom they called "Dan" to try the cases for which they paid him a small fee of five or ten dollars.

The consequence of this was that "Dan" soon got the reputation of being a first rate lawyer while Major Cochran and his fellows stood still. He soon became familiar with all the old land grants and patents and titles in New York and no lawyer could equal Daniel Cady in suits where such titles were in question.

Under the direction of Major James the old Cochran home, still standing, was built. He was first married to Eleanor Barclay of Philadelphia who died early. He lived single until 1822 when he married his cousin, Catherine Van Rensselaer Schuyler, widow of Col. Samuel Malcolm. She was the youngest daughter of Gen. Philip Schuyler, and was in many respects a remarkable woman. Her life had been full of romance and viscissitudes. She was born in Albany the 30th day of February, 1781 and at her baptism General and Mrs. Washington acted as two of her sponsors. *

While she was still an infant she narrowly escaped the tomahawk of the Indians. The tale has been often told and is known to all.

The Schuyler house in Albany was quite outside the city, and a plot was concocted to take the General prisoner and rob the house of the valuable silver plate. This was carried into execution August 7th, 1781. The party consisted of Canadians, Tories and Indians. At the first alarm the General rushed up stairs for his arms and the family followed, when it was discovered that the most important member of the family, the baby had been left behind. The mother was frantic but Margaret Schuyler, an older sister flew down stairs and snatching up the child bore it to a place of safety, but she narrowly escaped the flying tomahawk of a savage which stuck in the baluster. The attempt to kidnap General Schuyler failed, but the party carried away three prisoners and some of the family silver. None of the latter was recovered but the soup tureen was heard of at a dinner in Montreal several years afterwards.

Catherine Schuyler had once (in 1794) with her father passed up the Mohawk Valley and through the wilderness to Oswego. She had seen her vast domain on Crosby's Patent, so that she was not entirely a stranger to it when she came to New Hartford, Oneida County in 1808 as the wife of Samuel Bayard Malcom, who was a son of Col. Wm. Malcom of the Revolution, and who with Aaron Burr raised the first regiment of artillery from this state.

Malcom received with his wife a fortune of $100,000 in money and this magnificent estate of field and forest. He was a lawyer, but spent the most of his time in managing, or mismanaging his wife's estate. So that upon his death about 1815 the property

was all gone and the family reduced to poverty.

Mrs. Malcom bore all her misfortune with wonderful patience and resignation. The change to her was very great. Born and reared in affluence, the daughter of the great Schuyler, closely allied to the Van Rensselaers, Van Cortlands and Livingstons, the sister-in-law of Alexander Hamilton, and once the owner of a vast estate in her own right, she was now left a widow and without means.

In 1822 in Utica she married her cousin, Major James Cochran, and in 1827, the removed to Oswego.

I remember Mrs. Cochran well. It was in the early Summer of 1857, that I had the pleasure of seeing her in her own home in Oswego, and I was much impressed with the dignity of her appearance, and the grace and courtesy of her manners. The house was small and plain but there remained evidences of the former prosperity of the family in various pieces of furniture and in the portraits on the walls. Mrs. Cochran died in August of the same year. She having

THE COCHRAN HOUSE NEAR PALATINE CHURCH

* This is confirmed by Mrs. Margaret Collins of Fonda, widow of the late John F. Collins, 1865-1920 who was an authority on Mohawk Valley history. A careful search of his library reveals only one instance where the death of General Cochran is recorded as elsewhere than in Palatine. All the others fix it at Palatine on April 6, 1807.

Lossing in his documentary history says:

Cochran. John, Physician, Surgeon and General. Born at Chester, Pa., 1730. Father born North of Ireland. Dr. John Cochran as surgeon's mate in French and Indian Wars. Settled in Albany. Married Gertrude Schuyer, only sister of Philip Schuyler, 1777. Served in the war of the Revolution. Washington appointed him surgeon general of Middle department in 1781. Later was Director General of Hospitals for the U. S. Died at Palatine April 6, 1807, aged 76.

survived her husband many years.

Walter Livingston Cochran the second son of Major John Cochran, was also a prominent figure in his day, at the old home in Palatine, in Utica, and in the various places where he afterwards resided. He was a man of distinguished presence and of most pleasing manners, one who could set the table in a roar, with a song or story or melt his audience to tears with his pathos.

As before stated he had held a captains commission in the army, but he had resigned. He was also a lawyer but he did not practice his profession, but continued to live at the old home in Palatine until 1812 when he eloped with Miss Cordelia Smith the only daughter of Judge Peter Smith, and sister of Garrett Smith of Peterboro.

It was a love match and the wedding was a hurried one, the pair flying to their Gretna Green in a gig and a tandem team, in such haste that the bride's whole trousseau was lost on the road from the single hastily packed portmanteau.

The marriage took place in Johnstown where Daniel Cady lived, Mrs. Cady being the bride's aunt. An eye witness who was in Johnstown at the time, says that the marriage took place without the knowledge or consent of Judge Smith, and that he did not forgive the pair for many years, and that Garret, then about 19 years of age and who was present at the wedding, was disinherited by his father but that he was reinstated after a time and the lovers forgiven.

They probably lived at the old house in Palatine until 1817 when the whole Cochran family removed to Utica.

A contemporary describes Mrs. Cochran as a marked character, as much distinguished for her conversational powers as her brother Garret was for his eloquence. About 1825 Captain Cochran was in command of one of the North River steamboats, but his wife dying soon after he removed to Oswego, where he died in 1857 aged 87 years.

The family consisted of eight children of whom John Cochran of New York, Brigadier General in the war of the Rebellion, and late Member of Congress is the oldest.

Some excerpts from a letter received from Gen. Cochran will add interest to these random recollections of the old house.

" * * I regret to say that I am quite barren of the information you desire. I was but an urchin of three or four years old when my father's family removed from Palatine Church to Utica, yet I remember the mansion and vicinage and many events impressed on my childish memory. I recollect my going to school, the name of our family physician, Dr. Webster, the slaves we had and my attendance at the Palatine Church, etc., etc.

I have understood that, as my grandfather Dr. John Cochran aged, he removed with his family to Palatine. This place was selected, I suppose, because in the vicinity of or adjoining lands, assigned my grandfather as an officer in the Revolutionary army.

The mansion now standing was erected under the superintendence of my uncle, James Cochran. There was standing some years since a small law office, on the place next the highway. In this office my uncle James and partner, Phil R. Frey, practiced law. I have before me an open book, a souvenir of Phil R. Frey, it is the "Law of Nations" by M. DeVattel. Its title page bears the superscription "Phil R. Frey's also Hendrick Frey's." On the fly leaf I find "Phil R. Frey. Ipsius Liber" and in his hand writing (he is said to have written like copper plate) this regulation:

"This book is not to be lent out any more."

How it has traveled a devious journey from that day to this and at last found rest and station in my library in New York, I am at a loss to di-

* In the volume "A Godchild of Washington," by Catherine Schuyler Baxter, the frontispiece reads as follows: "On the parish register of the Reformed Dutch Church in Albany, N. Y., may be seen the following record of baptims, on March 4th, 1781, by the Rev. Elardus Westerlo:

| Ouders (Parents) | Kindern (Children) | Getuigen (Witnesses |
|---|---|---|
| Philip Schuyler | Catherine Van Rensselaer | G. Washington |
| Catherine Van Rensselaer | | James Van Rensselaer |
| | | Mrs. Washington |
| | | Marguerite Schuyler |

vine. Probably however it drifted from the little law office on the Palatine highway, and so onward "on the tide of time," till it found safe haven here in this roaring port of New York.

The mansion where my father and uncle resided having been built when accommodations for travelers between Albany and Utica were few, was the resort of all their acquaintances who passed up and down the Mohawk. Especially was this so during the war of 1812-13. Their hospitality was generous and proverbial. General Scott told me that, as he passed to the northern frontier, he stopped with them. Their larder being exhausted they killed for him, he said, the peacock which furnished to his taste a capital dinner.

The period of my father's occupancy clothed the house with many of the characteristics of frontier life, large and lavish expenditure and indiscriminate hospitality. * It certainly is a land mark in the history of the country, to which as I know clung the early recollections of many an octogenarian, who in his earlier days was its inmate and guest, but now gathered to his fathers.

My father was a noted tandem driver, and owned two noted "Naragansetts." Doubtless "some hoary headed swain" if you can find him surviving may tell you even now of Walter Cochran's spanking Naragansetts and of their countryside repute.

In those days long trains of "Canastoga" wagons, driven by Yankees and bearing merchandise for the west thronged the highway, and exasperated the Dutch farmers of the Mohawk. Thereupon would ensue furious battles between the Palatine Dutchmen and the "damned Yankees."

This Philip R. Frey, spoken of by General Cochran was the only son of Col. Hendrick Frey. Though but a lad at the time of the Revolutionary troubles he was arrested on suspicion of being a loyalist, and confined in the jail at Johnstown from which he made his escape in a very perilous and romantic way, being assisted through the wilderness to Niagara by Molly Brant and other Mohawk Indians. He became a lieutenant in "8th or Kingsown" and was at Oriskany battle, afterwards going with his regiment to Detroit where he married Marie Louise St. Martin, a niece of General Montcalm. As a United Empire Loyalist he was entitled to a large body of land in Canada but he returned after the war to his native valley and practiced law at Palatine Church as mentioned by General Cochran. There is no evidence that he was hated or suspected on account of his course in the war, but there can be no doubt that the feeling was very bitter against Tories in general and particularly those who had taken part in those numerous raids that had wasted the Mohawk Valley.

And so it was not to be wondered at that there were mutterings of wrath when it was learned in March, 1792 that Joseph Brant had been invited to a conference with the government at Philadelphia and that he had left Niagara for that city, via the Mohawk Valley, to visit his old home and to look upon the land that he had wasted so ruthlessly with fire and tomahawk.

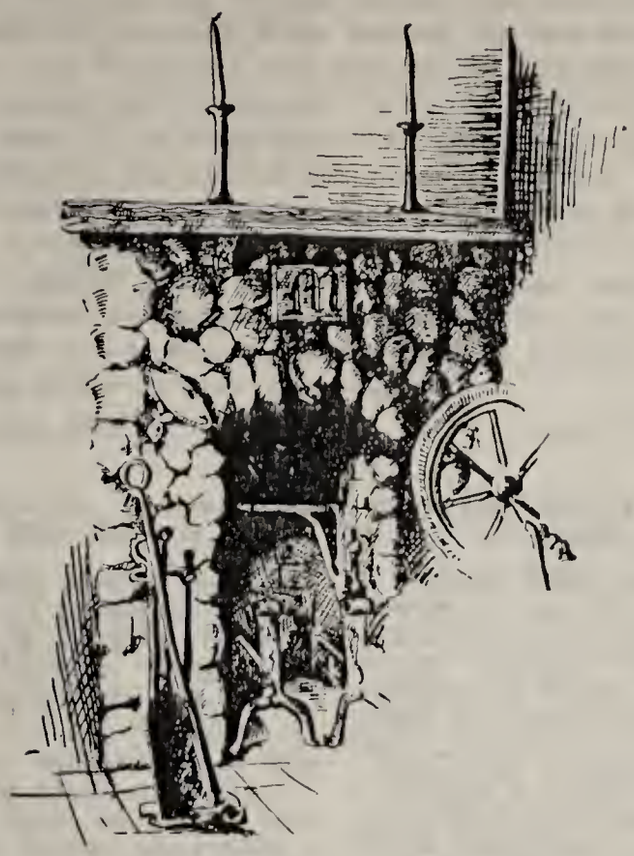
In due time he came accompanied by two gentlemen and attended by two body servants of his own, and, as the home of the Cochrans stood out a few miles from Brant's old home at Indian Castle *, he was invited by Major John Cochran to pass the night.

As soon as this became known a mob gathered and there was danger that he would be dealt with in a very summary manner and it became necessary to spirit him away in the darkness to some other place. But he pursued his journey the next day and arrived safely in Philadelphia, altho he was followed as far as New York by a man who vowed to take his life.

S. L. FREY.

* This was the Castle of the Canajoharees laid down in Sautier's map.

* Many articles of furniture in the Cochran house, consisting principally of mahogany were received from General Washington from his headquarters in Newburg as "a gift to my friend General Cochran."



The following lines from Goldsmith convey in a few brief stanzas the spirit of the Cochran House in its golden days of hospitality when the new republic was just breaking the chrysalis of old world and colonial custom and when the traveler was still welcomed as the bearer of good tidings and honored accordingly.

Blest be that spot, where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire;
Blest that abode, where want and pain repair,
And every stranger finds a ready chair;
Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crowned,
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale,
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good.—The Traveler.

# Klock and Nellis Families

The first white settlers in and about Palatine Church were the two Nellis brothers, Christian and William Nellis. Just east of the present village of St. Johnsville Hendrick Klock located. He had two daughters, Barvalis (Barbara) and Magdalene who married the two Nellis pioneers thus uniting these families by a double tie. It is the purpose of this article to give what is known of the early history of these two families. The record is far from complete and undoubtedly there are errors. Milo Nellis has given several years to the work and has solved several baffling points but there remains a vast amount of research. Authorities are given wherever available and a sincere effort made to penetrate the unwritten history of these early pioneers. Incomplete as the work is, we are giving it at this time in the hope that it may aid those who are interested in completing their family line as far back as the revolution.

Dated August, 1927. THE PUBLISHER.

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**CHRISTIAN NELLIS, Pioneer (1697-1771), Wife Barvalis**

Christian Nellis, pioneer born 1697, died 1771, age 74 tombstone record; married February 29, 1718 (German Bible record) Barvalis, daughter of Hendrick Klock, pioneer.

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Christian Nellis' children were: Henary who lived at home; Christian, Jr., Revolutionary hero, born 1731, married Christiana Keyser, died November 6, 1807, age 73 years 8 months and nine days; Adam; George; Dewalt, Deobold or Theobold; Catherine who married first Leonard Helmer, Jr., (deed record), married second Col. Jacob Klock, died August 20, 1805, age 81 years, 7 months, 2 days (tombstone record).

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Christian, Jr. had four children, Johannes (John C.) born or baptised November 14, 1764; Elizabeth born or baptised June 21, 1767; Jacob C.; and Christian III.

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Jacob C. had two sons Jacob C. who had four children, Jerry, Walter, Ann and Satle; John C., had six children, Wallace, Joseph, Abraham, James, Charles, Bertha.

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Catherine, daughter of Christian married first Leonard Helmer, Jr. (deed record), had a son Philip Helmer, married second Col. Jacob Klock (no children by this marriage. She died August 20, 1805, age 81 years, 7 months, 2 days (tombstone record).

**WILLIAM NELLIS, Pioneer (1694-1778), Wife Magdalene**

William Nellis, pioneer, brother of Christian, born January 1, 1694, died January 17, 1778 (church record of death) married Magdalena Klock, daughter of Hendrick Klock, pioneer, birth and death not found.

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William's children: William 2d, wife Maria Dorothea Saltsman; Hendrick (Canadian branch); Johannes Ludwig, died Nov-December, 1809, wife Elizabeth; Andreas or Andrew; daughter unknown.

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William III born, son of William 2d, born June 9, 1765, married Lany Waggoner November 15, 1789.

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William III had eight children as follows: Anna born Nov. 4, 1792, Lany born Nov. 12, 1796, Elijah b. Nov. 7, 1806, Margaret born Dec. 21, 1790, Catherine born Jan. 2, 1800, Mary born Feb. 4, 1803, Elizabeth born Dec. 28, 1809, Captain Joseph W. b. Oct. 10, 1794 who married ——Fox, daughter of Peter Fox.

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Captain Joseph W. had four children, William (buried in Fort plain cemetery), Oliver, Nathan and Alonzo.

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William's children are Joseph living in New York City, Mrs. Melvin Shults of St. Johnsville and Blanche.

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Olivers children are son Buel, who have two sons living in Oneida.

Nathan's chilren are Bruce, Byron, Frank, Charles, Ernest, Deafia, who is Mrs. Israel Curtis, Elsie who is Mrs. W. E. Montgomery, Maggie who is Mrs. Elmer Walrath and Edith who is Mrs. Dan Ruller.
deceased, a lawyer from Watertown and his son is George a doctor in Watertown.

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Ludwig, son of William Nellis had a son John Ludwig deceased and his son Peter (possibly Peter W.). Will also mentions daughters Mary wife of Anthony Peck, Margaret wife of Christ. W. Fox, Catherine wife of George Shults, Elizabeth wife of Adam Kilts, also baptisms at Stone Arabia Lutheran record, volume 1, page 22, Sept. 11, 1742 William; page 23 November 30, 1760 Catherine; page 36, December 3, 1762 Johannes; page 51 Sept. 16, 1764 Maria; page 75 May 14, 1767 Ludwig.

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Unknown daughter married a son of Peter Woermuth pioneer. She died June 5, 1748. Their only son lieutenant Wormuth killed by Joseph Brant, noted Indian chief at Cherry Valley.

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The Klock family were among the first white settlers in this portion of the valley. Hendrick Klock is the first and may have been accompanied by a brother Johannes. The lat- is not definitely located as yet. There are confusing traces of Johannes which are not classified. Hendrick however is clearly defined and his tombstone remains standing with its faint inscription.

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### HENDRICK KLOCK, Pioneer (1665-1760) Wife Jacomyntie

Hendrick had ten children: 1. Col. Jacob Klock; *2. Honorich, Jr.; 3, Johannes; 4, Johangurgh (assumed to be George or "Old George", also called Ury and Jerry); 5, Coonrod (minor in 1742 settled in Fairfield before the Revolution); 6, Hannarum (minor in 1742); 7, Honyost (minor in 1742); 8, Barvaris (married Christian Nellis, Sr., pioneer Feb. 1718); 9, Magdalena (married William Nellis, pioneer); 10, Adam. Not mentioned in father's will. Lt. of exempts killed at Oriskany, Aug. 6th, 1777.

* Honorich, Jr., had a son Hendrick who married Anna Jung (Young), Jan. 7th, 1762.—Stone Arabia Reformed Church Rec. Page 166.

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### Col. Jacob Klock, Son of Hendrick, the Pioneer

Col. Jacob Klock (d. May 9, 1798, date of birth unproven) married Elizabeth Bellinger, daughter of Frederisk Bellinger. Last wife, Catherine Nellis, widow of eLonard Helmer, Jr. and mother of Philip Helmer. She was a daughter of Christian Nellis, Sr. first settler. No children by Col. Jacob Klock. The children were descendants of Jacob and Elizabeth Bellinger or a former wife.

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### Descendants of Col. Jacob Klock, Patriot

1 * Jacob and wife Rachael.

2. Adam married Caty Seeber. They had one son Jacob living at the time Col. Jacob made his last will.)

3. Margaret married Stephen Marsh August 11, 1771.

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* See page 43 New York in the Revolution. Soldier in Washington's army.

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Jacob Jacob, (son of Jacob and Rachael married first Anna Hess Sept. 27, 1770. 2nd Elizabeth (widow at time of death of Col. Jacob Klock.) Other children of Jacob and Rachael are Eva, wife of Christian Klock and Anna, wife of Rev. John Henry Dysslin.

* Peter March son of Margaret and Stephen March married Elizabeth Diefendorf (Fort Plain Dutch Ref. Records, Rev. John J .Wach.) Other children of Margaret and Stephen March—John March, Henry March.

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* Rebuilt Fort Plain Sand Hill Church burned by Brant 1780.

### Family of George Klock

George Klock son of pioneer Henry married a Walrath. They had three children, George G., Jacob G. and Elizabeth.

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George G. married August 10, 1766 Catherine Bellinger, license dated June 12, 1766. They had three children Joseph G., Peter and John Bellinger. Incomplete—several other children.

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Jacob G. married 1st Hanna Nellis daughter of Christian Nellis II. (See article on Col. Jacob Klock in Enterprise) 2nd Maritje Beekman daughter of——, Kingston, N. Y.

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Elizabeth married Col. Ebenezer Cox killed at Oriskany Aug. 6, 1777. They had one son Ebenezer Cox, Jr. (Fort Plain Dutch Ref. records baptisms Ebenezer Cox and wife Nancy, their children Robert June 2, 1809; Elisa, Sept. 31, 1812.

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### Family of Adam Klock

Adam Klock killed at Oriskany (Simms vol. II page 553, First Settlers in Fairfield were Conrad, Jacob, Adam and Joseph Klock).

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Maria widow of Adam Klock (died) gestorben Dec. 18, 1793, (buried) beerdigt d. 20 ejust a. c, aged 55 years. 3 months less 3 days (Fort Plain Dutch Reformed Church record vol. 1 page 84. Rev. Pick or Peek.

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Child Anna Klock, (Fort Plain Dutch Reformed record marriages 1789 Jimmy Reily lawful son Robert Riley, nil Anna Klock lawful nachgel daughter von vege Adam Klock.

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### Hans Hendrick Klock Son of Hendrick Klock Pioneer

Stone Arabia Dutch Ref. record pa. 77, Johannes Klock son of Hans Hendrick Klock married March 11, 1760 Anna Margarete Schomaker unmarried daughter of Thomas Schomacher inhabitant at the Fall (Little Falls).

Will of Johannes H. (?) Klock dated 5-19-1809 probated 2-15-1817 mentions wife Anna Margretha, son Geo I., daughter Lena wife of M. M. Bauder, grandson Johannes G. of George I. Witnesses Jacob G. Klock, John B. Klock.

### Stone Arabia Dutch Reformed Birth Baptism Records

June 24, 1761; parents Johannes Klock and Anna Margretha; child's name, Johannes Thomas.

August 21, 1762; parents Johannes Klock and Anna Margartha; child's name Magdalena; witnesses, Magdalena and Johannes Bellinger.

Dec. 15, 1764; paretsn, Johannes Klock and Anna Margartha; child's name, Johannes; witnesses, Johannes Klock and Elizabeth Klockin.

Jan. 30, 1767, parents, Johannes Klock and Anna Margartha; child's name, George. (Begin page 53 vol. 15 next season).

Vol. II page 14 Lany Klock wife of Michael M. Bauder died April 22, 1838 aged 76 years 4 mos. 2 days.

Michael M. Bauder died Dec. 28, 1822 aged 60 years 11 mos. 14 days.

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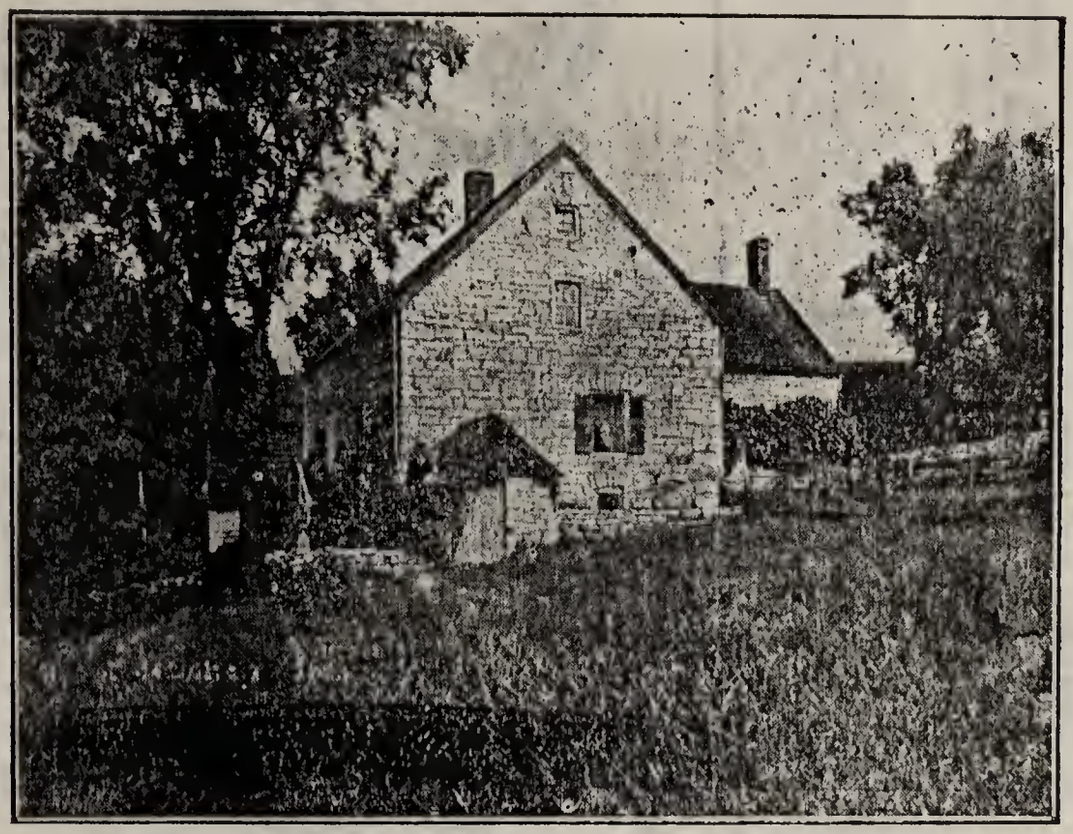
### The Family of Johannes (Fort Klock Branch

2032757

Authorities differ on Johannes Klock. Some maintain that the pioneer Henry had a brother Johannes who settled somewhere here and started the Johannes line. Others hold that the original Johannes was a son of Henry. Certain it is that Henry had a son Johannes as proven by his will of 1743 wherein he is mentioned. At that time Henry had located his family according to his wishes, Jacob on the home property (now Sheldon Klock's), Johannes on the farm east, and who built Fort Klock in 1750, George (Johangurgh) on a farm west of the village (now Hellibrandt), Conrad went to Fairfield. Jacob (afterwards Col. Jacob) remained on the homestead (now Sheldon Klock's) near the family burial plot and church site. Johannes built the stone fort known as Fort Klock. George erected his dwelling on his place west of the present West St. Johnsville. Fort Klock built by Johannes was of stone and was a haven of refuge for the settlement during the unsettled times of the French and Indian war. During the revolution it was also a refuge as was also the home of Col. Jacob Klock which was palisaded also. In fact this latter structure was referred to as Fort Klock by witnesses in the court martial of Gen. Rensselaer and

Simms says "there were two Fort Klocks." George also fortified his house which in honor of the builder Capt. Christian House and perhaps to distinguish it from the other two Fort Klocks called the defense Fort House. At the present site of St. Johnsville was the palisaded Zimmerman residence known as Fort Zimmerman. This is the picture during the Revolution.

Noticeable in the family line is the middle initial in which the line for several generations was distnguished as for instance, the initial G was the line of George and the initial J was the line of Jacob and Johannes. However in the course of time the written J resembling the initial I became confused and eventually resolved into an I, especially in the line of Johannes.



FORT KLOCK, BUILT BY JOHANNES KLOCK IN 1750

Johannes Klock grandson of the pioneer Henry married Catherine Foltz, Dec. 2, 1766. (Stone Arabia D. R. R.)

**Fort Klock Burial Plot**

John J. Klock, born Oct. 13, 1741, who departed this life Dec. 28, 1810, age 69 years 2 months 15 days.

aCtherine (Foltz) born Jan. 28, 1749, wife of John J. (?) Klock died March 18, 1813, age 64 years 2 mos. 20 days.

(At the foot of the above in burial plot). This was Anna G. Klock and a cousin of her husband. Anna, wife of Jacob I. Klock died April 2, 1851, age 3 months 13 days.

Alongside of 1st and 2nd also Margaret daughter of John J. Klock and wife of John W. Nellis born Sept. 18, 1769 died Dec. 31, 1844, age 75 years 82 years 2 months and 6 days.

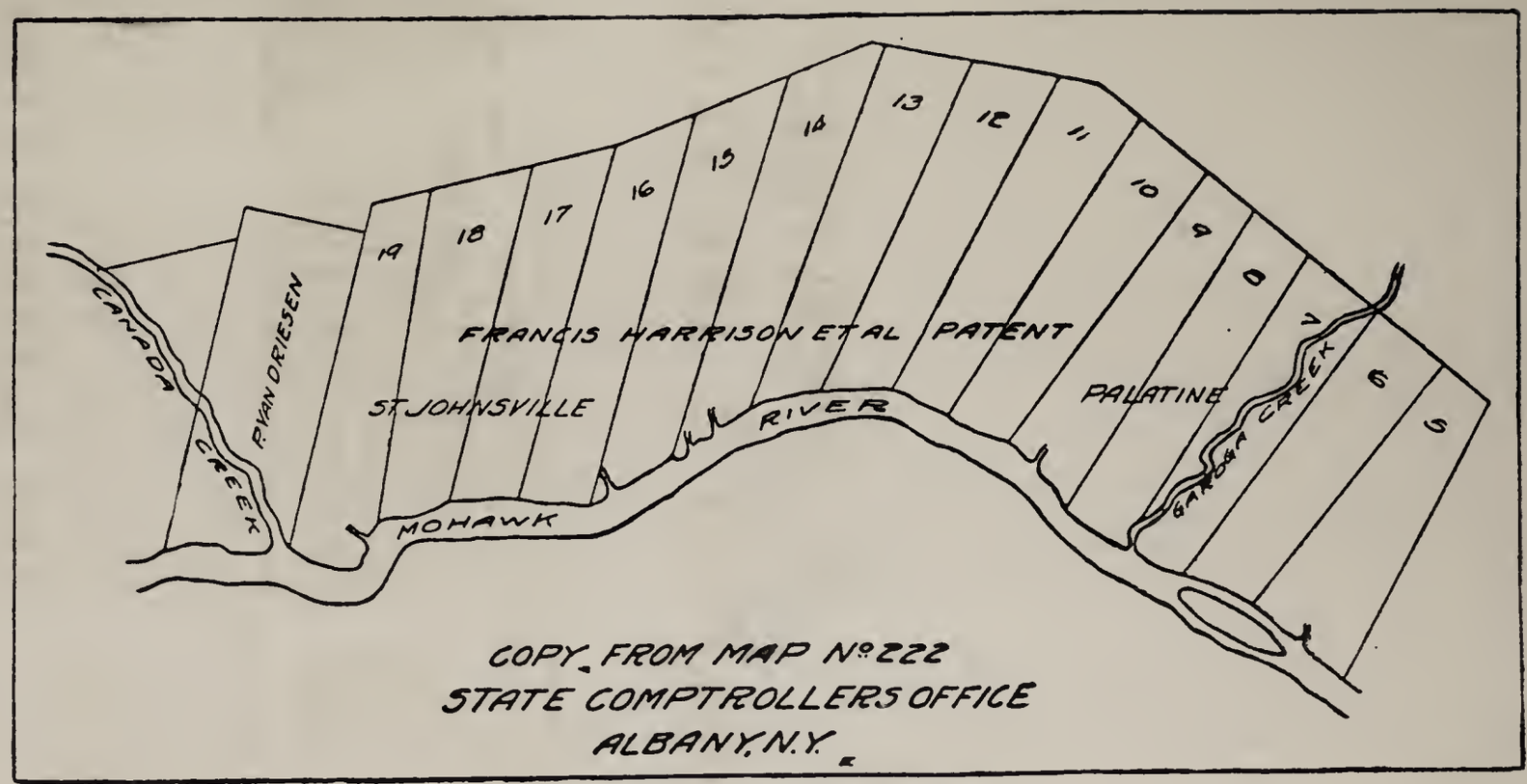
John W. Nellis died Nov. 22, 1834, aged 67 years 6 mos. and 20 days.

Lany wife of Benjamin W. Nellis (born Jan. 29, 1812) died May 10, 1862 ,age 50 years 3 mos. and 11 dys.

Benjamin W. Nellis born Aug. 15, 1811 died Apr. 12, 1892, age 81 years, 8 moss. 7 days.

Adam I. Klock, died June 1, 1866, age 75 years 1 mo. 5 days, first wife Sally died July 20, 1816 age 27 years, 10 mos. 4 days; second wife Catherine daughter of Daniel Fox died Mar. 12, 1857, age 66 years 5 mo and 15 days.

Amos Klock, son of Adam I died Nov. 2, 1913, age 79 years.




THE FRANCIS HARRISON PATENT

Purchased from the Mohawk Indians in 1722 for 700 Beaver skins, by Harrison and others "in the name and behoof of our sovereign lord, George III, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King, defender of the faith, etc." and sold by the crown to the original patent holders. The patent embraced the land north of the Mohawk from below the Palatine line on the east to Canada Creek on the west. The lot holders given are as they stood after the revolutionary war. The tract to the west was a patent of 7423 acres granted in the year 1786 to John Van Driessen, the grandson of Dominie Petrius Honorias Van Driessen. The site of the first church edifice of the organization was upon the Petrius Van Driessen patent.

**The Lot Owners**

5. P. Warenmoth and Waggoner
6. P. Waggner
7. Ph. Fox and Geo. Helmer
8. L. Helmer and H. W. Nellis
9. Hess and Bellinger
10. Phi. Nellis and Jo Hess
11. John Klock
12. Christr. Nellis
13. George G. Klock and Jacob Klock
14. Timmerman and Veeling
15. Timmerman and Veeling
16. J. G. Klock
17. Adam Woolraat and Geo. Klock
18. Timmerman and Veeling
19. Elisabeth Johnson
20. Pet. Vandrissen Patent